

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUANDA 00652 011007Z

21

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 SAM-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 OMB-01 AID-20 IO-14 EB-11 DRC-01

/167 W

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R 010745Z AUG 74

FM AMCONSUL LUANDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2836

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

CINCLANT FOR POLAD

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUANDA 0652

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI AO

SUBJECT: CABINDA - ADVANCE TO THE REAR

CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

1. ACCORDING TO RELIABLE SOURCE IN PORTUGUESE HIGH COMMAND, LOCAL ARMY STAFF IS STUDYING FEASIBILITY OF ABANDONING SEVERAL SMALL ARMY OUTPOSTS IN NORTHERN CABINDA, INCLUDING BELEAGUERED MICONGE. STATED REASON FOR PULLBACK IS TO PERMIT REGROUPING OF ARMY TROOPS AROUND POPULATED SETTLEMENTS THAT ARE WORTH THE TROUBLE OF PROTECTING. RATHER THAN MERE GARRISONING OF NEARLY UNPOPULATED BORDER OUTPOSTS FOR SAKE OF MAINTAINING INTEGRITY OF FRONTIER.

2. WAR IS NOT OVER YET. JULY 27 CONVOY FROM BELIZE TO MICONGE WAS AMBUSHED BY ESTIMATED 35 MPLA TROOPS. PORTUGUESE SUFFERED
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PAGE 02 LUANDA 00652 011007Z

3 KIA AND 18 WIA. DESPITE CONSTANT HARASSMENT OF THEIR ONLY

OVERLAND SUPPLY ROUTE TO MICONGE, PORTUGUESE INSIST THAT, USING HELICOPTER RESUPPLY AND PARACHUTE DROPS, THEY COULD HOLD POST INDEFINITELY IF THEY STILL WANTED TO.

3. NEWS REPORTS OUT OF BRAZZAVILLE SEEN IN LUANDA PRESS INDICATE CONGO GOVERNMENT IS PROTESTING PORTUGUESE AIR FORCE BOMBING OF 4 CONGOLESE VILLAGES ON JULY 28. LOCAL SOURCE ADMITTED BOMBING BY B-26S OF MPLA POSITIONS JUST INSIDE CABINDA BORDER DID TAKE PLACE ON THAT DATE, WITH "EXCELLENT" RESULTS, BUT THAT THEY DID NOT HIT ANY VILLAGES IN CONGO.

4. SOURCE WAS ASKED ABOUT RUMOR SPREADING THROUGH LUANDA TODAY OF MASSIVE PORTUGUESE REINFORCEMENTS MOVING UP TO CABINDA, AND CONCOMMITANT EVACUATION OF PORTUGUESE MILITARY DEPENDENTS FROM ENCLAVE. HE FLATLY DENIED BOTH STORIES. HE DID ADMIT THAT MPLA WAS STEPPING UP ITS ACTIVITIES IN NORTHERN THIRD OF CABINDA, BUT THAT ONLY PORTUGUESE REACTION PLANNED WAS SOME BOMBING AND AFOREMENTIONED REGROUPMENT.

5. COMMENT: CONGEN ASSESSES REGROUPMENT AS PURELY TACTICAL REALIGNMENT AND DOES NOT FEEL THIS PRESAGES PRECIPITENT PORTUGUESE PULLOUT FROM CABINDA. STORY, WHEN IT HITS LOCAL RUMOR MILL, HOWEVER IS LIKELY TO UPSET MANY PEOPLE INCLUDING CABINDA-GULF CO. WE ARE MEETING CABGOC DIRECTOR AUGUST 1 AND WILL BRIEF HIM. BRIGGS

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